

Tabakea's fire-stick repeated in only slightly
different version by Gulle
1923: 372-4.

unattested

2 of A.

1. Tabakea was a man of the dry land and Bakoa a man of the sea. Bakoa adopted a child, Teika, who had the job of watching the rising sun, chasing it and grabbing a trailing ray which he took to Bakoa who put it in a hut and kept it there as his child. No sooner had he put the child in the hut than the hut went up in flames so Bakoa put it into another hut which, of course, burned down too. When he found that all his possessions were being destroyed, Bakoa sent the ray-child away and it went to Tabakea and destroyed all his possessions as well for it had a red-hot skin. Tabakea decided he had better kill the ray-child so he collected a lot of sticks of uri, taume, and ren and other trees and beat the flames out.

Bakoa found that he missed the child very much and sent messengers to Tabakea in search of it. 'Have you seen any sight of Bakoa's child?' they asked. 'No', replied Tabakea so they asked him again. Tabakea told them to bring him some uri wood that stood nearby and, when they brought it, he fashioned a fire-stick and made fire which, so the messengers said, was indeed the child of Bakoa. They told Tabakea they wanted to take the child away with them so he collected a lot of dried coconut leaves, set them alight and gave that to them. They took it off but it died before they reached Bakoa. That is the true story of the fire-stick.

Notes

1. Uri, *Guettarda speciosa*.
Taume, branchy stem in which coconuts develop
Ren, *Messerschmidia*.